

A
S E R M O N
O C C A S I O N E D

By the Death of the late Duke of
D E V O N S H I R E,

Who Departed this Life, *August the 18th,*
1707. At Devonshire-House, London.

By *JOHN GRIFFITH, M. A.*
Chaplain to His Grace the Duke of
Devonshire; Curate of the Parochial
Church of *Edensor*, near *Chatsworth* in
Derbifhire.

Ille dolet ver qui sine Teste dolet.

L O N D O N :

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Inscribed to His Grace

WILLIAM

DUKE OF

DEVONSHIRE,

Lord Steward of

The Household to Her

MAJESTY ;

One of the Lords of the Most Honourable Privy Council, and one of the Knights of the Most Noble Order of the **GARTER**. Humbly presented by His Grace's

Most Obedient,

AND

Most Humble Servant,

JOHN GRIFFITH.

WILLIAM

DENON SWARE

The Household to list

M A I S T Y



On the 1st of the 1st of 1800
the British Museum Council and one
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of the 1st of the 1st of 1800

JOHN CRISTIAN

A
S E R M O N

Occasion'd by the Death of the late

Duke of *Devonshire.*

2. Cor. 21. 10.

As Sorrowful, yet always Rejoycing.

THE belief of Jesus Christ is attended with abundance of dark circumstances, and melancholly Considerations, as the Apostle displays it in this Chapter in various Lines, Similitudes and Draughts : But so, as that after the first sable overcasting of the Scene, upon an unexpected opening and disclosure, here appears a comfortable Gaiety, and a new and surprising lustre and effulgence breaks in upon our Minds, and disperses the gloomy thickness ; as when the Sun cuts thro the hazy mist of a foggy Morning, he darts his Ray with

Greater strength, and a more continued vigour, and the dispersed Clouds add only to the illustrious brightness of the following day. To take only the former part of the comparisons running through the whole Chapter, would be the most damping to Mortality that it is possible for the Meditations of Man to form in his Mind, and as he elsewhere expresses it, if in this Life only, we had hope in Christ, then were we of all Men most miserable ; but still there is a superiour comfort, and strengthening refreshment behind the Curtain, that relieves our fainting Spirits, and supports our staggering Faculties : and when we seem to be in a tragick despair, converts our fears into rapture, and our sorrow into unforeseen and sudden transports. And all Blessings that light upon us unlookt for, add keenness to the delight, and the surprise enlarges the satisfaction. As this eloquent Apostle gradually amazes the Understanding, and like an expert Diver, when he seems to sink, emerges and springs up again with new strength and prodigious swiftness on the surface of the Water : It's unknown, and ye well known, as dying, and behold we live, as chastned, and yet not killed, as sorrowful, yet always rejoycing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things. Were we not, as Christians, infallibly assured of this, the words would appear absurd, and the sense flat, and full of contradiction. But it is at once the Glory and Happiness of our faith, that we must wade through mysterious Darkness to never-ending and unchangeable Flight, that now we see, as this Apostle speaks, but as through a Glass darkly, but hereafter we shall see Face to Face. Hardly do we kenn, and understand the things that before us, but when we come to examine the measures of things that shall be, like Moles, we pore and digg without Design or Success, or like the smitten Sodomites we grope on in an incurable Blindness. It is only that Revelation God has been pleased to dispence to, and allow us, that can unhood our winking Conceptions, and erradiate our benighted Knowledge with a more than Meridian day and warmth. That can overshadow, or illuminate our Minds, makes Knowledge Ignorance, and Ignorance Knowledge, deaden Life, or enliven Death, whip us till we are killed, or recover us by Stripes and Correcti-
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on, enliven us by Sorrow, or overwhelm us with Joy, make us poor when surrounded with Treasure, or enrich us even in Poverty, blast our Professions into nothing, or restore even nothing into boundless Wealth. This as Christians we firmly, and by the strongest reason, believe, and in the midst of the deepest Sorrow, feel a stream of Joy glide insensibly through the channel of our Hearts, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Grief and Joy are the most commanding and irresistible Passions of our Souls; the former unaccountably locking up all our senses, and chilling and congealing the springs of our satisfaction, and contracting the vessels and seats of our vital Blood and nobler Spirits: The latter by an unaccountable a force and motion, lifting up the Folding-doors and Flood-gates of our Blood and Spirits, dismissing from the centre of our Hearts, the streams of delight and complacency, thawing and dissolving the coagulated Particles, letting the Reins loose to a charming Torrent of contentedness and serenity, and overflowing, and inebriating, as it were, the sensible parts of both Soul and Body, and overcharging the Wings of our Extasie with redundant and resistless Joy, so that we die only to be with greater alacrity re-enlivened, and fresher supplies invigorated, and grieve only to be poured out into more spacious and extended transports, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. I had designed another Discourse, had I had the Honour to have spoken at his late Grace's Funeral and Interment: But I think it is but common Gratitude to touch a little that way the first time it has pleased God to enable me since my uneasie Journey: And as we have all, or most of us here, had a dependance on that Great Man, that will administer plenty enough for our Sorrow, and other Considerations plenty enough for our Rejoicing, as will be hinted in the conclusion of this Discourse: In the mean time let us reflect, as Christians, upon the general Reasons we have to grieve, and, for our Comfort again, the general Reasons we have to rejoyce.

First, We are to grieve for the Lapse, or Fall of our first Parents, and in them of us all.

Secondly, For the bitter Torments and Crucifixion of our Holy Redeemer.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, And more especially for our own sins the cause of all.

And, Fourthly and Lastly, for the loss of our Great and much lamented Lord and Patron. To all which with what brevity can be imagined. But,

I For the sorrow, we ought never to forget, for the lapse, or fall of our first Parents, and in them, of us all. When the common misfortunes of this Life gall us, we are chafed and fret, and do not readily return to a just composition, or settlement. When our own Affairs prove prosperous, and meet not with that success we expected, or our Relations miscarry, or our Friends are discouraged, or prove false, or the Lete of the World turns not as we would have it, what Outcries and Lamentations are every where to be heard? as if no such thing had ever been started before, tho the causes of complaint are as old as Adam, and may be met with in every congregation of Men from hence to Japan. But who, as the Psalmist says, O God regardeth thy Wrath? were our House, or our Barn on fire, or our cattle sick, or infected, or our money stolt, what a raising of the Country, or Neighbourhood would there be? what pumping and watching, and surmising and censuring? but when our Consciences are in a flame, our Minds corrupted, and our souls polluted, we walk as unconcerned about our Business, and do our work as undisturbedly, as if all were safe and secure about us, and in a jolly plighe and condition. And seldom care to probe the wound, till it is almost incurable, till either sickness seize and confine us, or Death execute and dispatch us. we are not for examining too speedily into the depth of the sore, nor running things up to the fountains head, tho the one may gangre, and the other be over-spread with filth and bitterness; but certainly the Man all this while forgets he is a Christian, and that it is his duty ever to have the beginning and end of the World in his Thoughts. It began with amiable light and order, but shall end in flames of horreur and confusion, Amiable indeed was its beginning, and glorious; all things answered the uniform Idea of its Great Creators Mind and Invention. The finishing stroke drew shouts of Joy, and peals of Acclamation, and applause from
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The Sons of God, the blessed Angels. Every thing was just, every thing was equal, regular, lovely, harmonious and tunable, till Man, disobedient Man, set the whole order of the Creation a clashing and threw universal Nature into endless Jar, and Discord. That was the hopeful fruit of execrable Sin and Disobedience; and the satisfaction of an unruly Appetite, and liquorish Palate, brought Death and Damnation upon the beautiful Stage of the World, unhinged the frame of Nature, and put all the elements at variance. And when Man became a Rebel, all the mute and brutal part of the Creation forsook and renounced their blasted Ruler, and shook off the ungrateful Yoke of his detested Domination, and he was left and abandoned to provide his daily Sustenance with greater difficulty than the lowest of Beasts. And what a woful consideration and source of Anguish and Sorrow is here to think, that one moments Intemperance should involve the whole Race, and all the Generations of the Sons of Men in one common and deplorable Ruin. That health and vigour, and soundness were immediately supplanted, and unsaddled by weakness, disease and rottenness, everlasting Enmity sown between his unhappy and dissenting Posterity, his Mind and Body at once divided and broken, The Charms of his Youth and Beauty withering and decayed, and his Immortality changed into the most ghastly appearance of a frightful Death. These are Contemplations that terrifie all our faculties, putrifie us into stone and marble, and confound us with eternal Despair, were not the Tables on the other side spread over with Mercy and Forgiveness; and did we not, to invert the words of the Apostle, perceive in the midst of death that we were in Life. Blessed with hopes of a more glorious Life, a more glorious Immortality. Oh the amazing Goodness and Wisdom of God; how unsearchable are his Works, and his ways past finding out! As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Sorrowful for the Fault and Transgression of our first Parents, Joyful that there was Mercy in the midst of Judgment, still to be reached out to undone Man; and that from his Loins should there a seed arise, that should bruise the head of the great Machinator of our Misery and Perdition; A man should be torn that should restore all things to a Capacity

capacity of greater Bliss, of greater Glory. For as in *Adam* all dyed, so in *Christ* shall all be made alive. In the fullness of Time that day was brought about, and the Sun of Righteousness shot out, and shone with a strength and vigour, that defeated and overthrew, at one encounter, the whole forces of the Principalities of the Kingdom of Darkness. The Devil saw that, and fled back to his mansions of horror and despair, and Hell it self felt an Increase of its Agonies, Convulsions and Torments. And the victorious *Jesus* dragged after his All-conquering Arms Captivity captive, and lead the confounded Realm of *Satan* in Chains and Triumph; what amazing Joy ought this to raise in our Minds and Hearts, what measures of Humiliation, what Effusions of Thanks? Yet all this was not effected.

II, Without new Occasions of Sorrow, even the bitter Passion and Torments of our holy Redeemer: He is describ'd by the Evangelical Prophet, *Isaiah*, as a Man of Sorrow, and acquainted with Grief, disregarded, disgrac'd, persecuted, and dishonour'd, smitten, beaten, and bruised, of no Comeliness, and despicable. Leading the whole course of his unspotted Life in distraction, affronts, and base usage, betray'd by the hellish Treachery of a false Disciple and perjur'd Servant, sold for a worthless parcel of Pence, valued after his false and undeserved Condemnation at a less price, than a seditious Murderer; flouted at, and derided by the Rabble, spit upon, beaten, and scourg'd by the insolent Soldiers and unmerciful Officers; and after a long and unbroken bearing of ill Treatment, and Disrespect led into pompous Mockery, and contemptuous Procession to be crucify'd and hung between two vile and guilty, and self-condemning Malefactors, and there in the midst of Tortures and Wounds, to expire forsaken, as he lamentably complains himself, of his God and Father, and with his own, and the convulsion of Nature yielding, and with resignation giving up his beloved and immaculate Ghost. And if these Considerations are not Causes great enough for a Sorrow, that might rend our Hearts, and gash our benumm'd Parts, and break up the hardened matter of our Minds, What are? Whence can Sorrow be fetcht, where does she dwell, and whence can grief
find

find a tenor habitation? Did we seriously ponder these things, and weigh them as we ought, and as often as we ought to do, we should melt away in the midst of Sorrow, and howl our selves into everlasting Woe. But then again, even from this lamentable sence and occasion of Grief, there springs again a new fund of Joy. When we consider, that from all this dreadful representation of Mercy and Horrour, our Redemption was wrought out and produc'd. That thus, as the Scripture says, it behoved Christ to suffer, that the Will of God might be fulfilled, his Wrath averted, his Justice pacified, and his Fury reconciled to disobedient Man. Sacrifice and burnt Offering thou wouldst have none; in the Volume of the Book it is written, Then said I, loe I come to do thy Will, O God. Without doubt, Great is the Mystery of Godliness, so Great, that even the most intelligent and quick-sighted of the Angels are at a loss, when they pry and pierce into it, and would peep under the Veil or Curtain, as *St Peter*, says, to make a further discovery. Yet thus far the Will of God has laid open to us, that our Redemption could this way be effected, and what excess of Joy ought it to raise in our thankful Hearts and Souls, to reflect that the Son of God forsook all the Glories and Happineses of Heaven, disrob'd himself, as it were of his Almightyness and Eternity, and empty'd himself of his Power and Majesty, to purchase Peace and Salvation to a Creature that never deserved it, and too often slights it: Yet still, where Grace and Piety find any Entertainment, insupportable Joy will there cohabit and reside, and dilate and purify that Breast that can justly value such prodigious Blessings, that can truly weigh the Merits of a bleeding Saviour's Death and Crucifixion. The remembrance is all transport, and exultation to the penitent and regenerate Christian; And tho for a time he may go on his way weeping, yet if he brings forth good Seed, he shall doubtless come again with Joy, and bring his sheaves with him. Weep and be sorrowful, more especially in the 2d place, we ought to be for our Sin is the accursed cause and fatal original of all our Sorrow. That embitters all our woe that sharpens and envenoms the sting of Death, as, when it has conceived and brought forth, it is the Parent of Death. We none
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of us know what we do, when we commit Sin, and it is certain, that in the Action, we do not weigh the terrible and unavoidable consequences of it. Did we consider, what the Apostle, using a strange Word, calls the filthiness of Sin, That it makes us Members of Hell, that it assimilates us to the Devil, that it was the occasion that first did, and still does break the intercourse between God and us, that it grieves and extorts Groans from his holy Spirit, that it stabs and crucifies a-new the Saviour of the World, that it makes us hateful in the sight of the holy Angels, that it intitles us to a portion with accursed Spirits, that it purchases our Death, and seals us over Soul and Body to Damnation, that we then become the adopted of the Devil, and may claim inheritance as the true Sons of Hell; there would be no end of our Lamentation and Sorrow. And did we seriously revolve, that nothing but the Blood and Passion, and Death of Christ, could atone fully and expiate, and make an equal satisfaction to the offended God of Heaven. That it forced his ever blessed Son from the Regions of Love and Light, and Glory, and Happiness, to quit his Throne and become vile, and enter upon a state of Servitude, Misery, Disgrace and Death, it would affrighten or bind us into Sorrow: And for this, nothing but Sorrow can truly be applied, for all those other occasions of Sorrow are but the natural products of detestable and execrable Sin, That overthrew Myriads of Angels once blest in Heaven, and unidid poor Man on Earth. Here indeed is a just and large field for Sorrow to display itself in. Yet even here too, such is our Happiness, and so great the bounty of Gods Mercy, is a door and inlet left for superiour Joy. If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; he is the Propitiation for our Sins and not for ours only, but the Sins of the whole World. But tho this ought to be no encouragement for Sinners to pursue their vicious courses that Grace may abound, yet as damps all presumption, so it keeps us from despair, is a Wall on this side, and a Wall on that side. And a wonderful cause of Joy to reflect, that the Goodness of God to our astonishment could find out such an amazing and undreamt of way to work our Redemption by. Behold now is the
accepted

accepted time, now is the day of Salvation. Words of unalterable and inestimable comfort, and which was denied the Angels of disobedience. Brethren, if we confess our Sins and forsake them, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness. He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth his Sins shall obtain Mercy. Oh the infinite consolation there is in those portions of Scripture to a dying Sinner, they are honey and balm to his embittered and wounded Spirit, and ought to excite the greatest of Joys in a Heart that has the least spark of Grace, Goodness or Gratitude left. Sorrow may continue in the night of Sin, but Joy will return with the springing day of Repentance, Sincerity and Righteousness. Joy not only to the Soul of the blessed Penitent, to the Minds of all his Neighbours, Friends Relations and Dependants, but to all Heaven, and all the holy Angels, the bright and worthy Inhabitants of Heaven. I say unto you, that likewise Joy shall be in Heaven over one Sinner that repented, more than over ninety and nine just Persons that need no Repentance. Which places me in the last part of my Discourse, for the loss of our Great and much lamented Lord and Patron. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. His Character has been given at large by an abler Hand and Head than mine, in a much greater Congregation; yet not, I am sure, by a more grateful or sorrowful Heart. It is none of my business to copy or write after any Man; and imitation was never my practice or delight, yet as it may be expected I would say something in this point, so I think it my duty so to do, with the same method and shortness I have managed the other divisions of my Text. Tho I have lost one of the greatest Friends and noblest Patrons in him, yet, as I never flattered him whilst living, so have I less reason so to do when dead. And if I were inclined that way, and the fault might seem pardonable, yet here may be enough among the Auditors, that might rebuke my Vanity, and dash me into silence on the first attempt. But as he was above it, and as far as I could perceive, never could approve or admit the least tendency to it when alive, so he wants it not in his chamber of Death. As sorrowful we ought to be for the loss of this great Person,

son, as we are Members of the Commonwealth, for which how zealous he was, and how much he ventured, the Publick is too well acquainted with to need any embellishment, or setting off from my weak Hand or Mouth. That therefore which cannot be justly described is better left unessayed. His great skill and judgment in Architecture, Sculpture, Gardening, Picture and Poetry, Artists themselves will, with truth and submission confess superiour even to their own, and the great encouragement he gave to ingenious Men of all those Faculties, should Ingratitude; which is impossible, make them dumb and silent in the acknowledgment of it. *Chatsworth*, in the division of those several Performances, would speak and proclaim to many ensuing Generations, a pile of that prodigious design [and magnificence, that no Subjects House in the World, that I know of, excels or equals it for ornament or solidity, and which would have held *Italian* Princes some Ages to have erected, and which took up but the declining part of his Life, of the Memory of which, and the vastness of his Mind, it will remain a durable Monument. The affability of his discourse, and the condescension of his behaviour in a Person of his high rank, so rarely to be met with, were inimitable, and much more easily admired than expressed; never stiff in his Assertions, willing to hear what could be spoken on the other side, as what he pronounced himself, never contemptuously rejecting any thing tho never so weakly proposed or offered; courteous generally to the lowest, and when not provoked, insolent on no occasion. He had an illuminated Mind, and would take things at the smallest hint or intimation. And tho the Majestick Presence of his Mein and Person, did awe and strike a Veneration into Persons that often conversed with him, yet by an unaccountable turn, he would quickly take that off, and lead them into as much Familiarity as modestly was consistent with his Greatness. The sagacity of his perception and sence was wonderful, his Wit always entertaining, never grating or tedious; and his Valour and Bravery in days of Action when called in question, terrible and unconquered, and his Spirit invincible, and his Courage undaunted to the last. What I can with some pretence of Justice, claim some little insight into; I

was, with amazement, surpris'd to find him so Great a Ma-
 ster of : Thoroughly vers'd in the *Classick* Authors of the *Ro-
 mans*, and of *Homer* and *Plutarch* of the *Greeks*, and so nice
 a Critick in Philosophy and Divinity, as might make some of
 its Professors blush. He was a just Pattern of *Economy*,
 and Hospitality, and as he kept as noble a Table as any Per-
 son of Quality in *Europe*, taking the year thro, so he was
 never better pleas'd, than when he saw it surrounded with
 Guests, at such a sight he was ever chearful, and beyond
 his usual endearments, engaging. As he lived the Love and
 Reverence of all discerning Men, so he dyed equally the
 same, and his Death was attended with the conflux of all
 Persons of that Character, and his Funeral answerable to
 the Grandeur of his Life: He has, by the building of
Chatworth, made many an ignorant Man a knowing Artist,
 and upheld a sinking and poor Neighbourhood, and it is
 but the least piece of Gratitude they can repay him of all
 those Obligations, to preserve his Memory sweet and em-
 balm in their Minds. In his Sickness, and on his Death-
 bed it pleas'd God to touch his Heart with a coal from his
 Altar, and melt him into a truly Christian Consideration of
 his state, in reference to his Soul, Body, and Estate, and
 soften him into Repentance, not to be repented of; for as
 I have heard him publicly detest, and disown Mr *Hobbs's*
 Principles as damnable, so he found the impertinence of any
 such Philosophy at that dreadful hour, when the wheel of
 the cistern turned slowly round, and the vibration of the
 pendulum of Life was just ceas'd and stop'd. That such Vani-
 ties were no prop for a departing Soul, and unequal to the
 weight of a sinking Spirit. Thus far we ought to grieve
 and be sorrowful for so great a Lord, so illustrious a Patriot,
 and so noble a Patron, that neither Beauty, Wit, Valour
 or Riches could secure him and preserve him for our further
 Comfort and Subsistence. No, a King has told us in his
 Psalms long ago, that when God grows displeas'd at our
 Iniquities, Men, even the Greatest of Men, are but Worms,
 and no Men. The Narration of his Grace's Pedigree and
 Endowments, was so largely laid open at the Funera Cere-
 mony at *Derby*, and painted in Great, that I shall content
 my self with these few and small sketches and strictures,
 since

since I speak to People that pably have greater occasion to know him than my self, and the liveliest description would fall short of the incomparable Theme. Thus far we ought to be sorrowful, but *i. e.* as always to rejoice. To rejoice that it has pleased God to take him from this miserable Life to himself, for what Life can be otherwise, that is afflicted with Dropsy, Gout and Stone, that he is now freed from Temptation and out of the reach of Frailty, that he is, we hope a Companion of the holy Angels and blessed Saints, That he has left so many and so glorious Monuments of his Goodness and Greatness, and Charity to this Neighbourhood in particular, and to the Kingdom in general, and in a distinguishing manner to the Clergy under his Patronage, That he dyed with the utmost Resignation and Penitence, forgiving all, and imploring Forgiveness of all, especially of his offended God. That his end was so sedate, so penitential, so placid and saint-like, that he had his Senses in Christian Contrition to the last, and closed his Life like a submissive Lamb. That he has left so many good Branches of his illustrious Family, and that he has left an Heir of all his Vertues, without any mixture of irregularity, as well as of his Estate, that may encrease his Benefactions, and be a Father to his surviving Friends and Neighbours, That he lived so greatly and dyed so piously. And oh ! That all this would make a just impression on our Hearts and Minds, that we might reform our Lives and amend our Conversations ; for we see that neither Courage, nor Princely Parentage, nor Wis, nor Learning, nor Charity, nor Beauty, nor Magnificence, can secure us from the dart of unconquerable Death, and when he strikes, all these drop and shrink from us, and nothing but the just Reflections on a Life well spent, the Encouragements of Repentance, the Mercies of God, and the Merits of a crucified Saviour remain for a Prop and Comfort. Oh ! That Men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.

Which God of, &c.

FINIS,

